

Kemper Station Trail Dedication

In 1999, my family moved to Lynchburg from Savannah, Georgia. It did not take long for us to discover the trails. On a Saturday morning, I decided to take a walk down to the Blackwater Creek Trail from our home, just as I had done numerous times when I lived in Savannah.

The only difference was that in Savannah many of the trails went in circles... while in Lynchburg they went for miles. Of course I didn't take a map!

I think that the beauty of the trails in Lynchburg is that they are never ending... they keep on growing... just like tree branches. I have also enjoyed watching our family grow up with the trails.

My wife and I have three children and each have special memories of the trails... our youngest, Ameliah, grew up on the trails, starting with a smooth ride on her stroller, onward to a safety seat on the back of my bike, and now she is able to ride on her own... with a little help from her training wheels. Soon she'll be keeping up with her older brothers.

Gregory took his first ride without training wheels on the Blackwater Creek Trail and now he enjoys going "Mud Bogging" with Dad on the Bike Trails at Peaks View Park.

Our oldest, Matthew, also enjoys biking the trails, especially the train tunnel. We also enjoy exploring the dirt trails that branch off in many directions.

Just recently our entire family spent a Saturday afternoon to do a "sneak peak" of the Kemper Street Station Trail. We wanted to see how this new trail connected with the rest of the trail system in Lynchburg. We were impressed with the new section and delighted to see where it merged onto the older trails.

My wife commented that the intersection of all the trails near the tunnel will probably need a traffic light or clover leaf if it gets any busier!

And speaking of busy, it's always a delight to see such a variety of Lynchburgers using the trails – people of every age and description, using every conceivable means of non-motorized transport. The trails are a great equalizer. And everyone you pass is so friendly, waving and saying hello. It's hard not to be in a good mood when enjoying our beautiful trails!

Thanks to staff of the Lynchburg Parks & Recreation Department along with volunteers from organizations such as the Friends of Lynchburg Stream Valleys. Also, a special thank to Ed Page, who was one of the visionaries in establishing the trails system. We are all following in his footsteps.

I find it interesting that this trail begins at Kemper Street Station, because in many ways the railroad provided the pathway to the trails. It is a fitting entrance to the trail system. Just remember, there **IS** no end!

Brian Knopp
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